

Submitted by Sergio Camacho  
Chair, CEOS ad hoc Working Group on  
Earth Observation Education and Training

## **Proposal to Change Status of WGEdu from *Ad hoc* to Permanent**

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### **SUMMARY AND PURPOSE**

The CEOS *ad hoc* Working Group for Education and Training in Earth Observation has been tasked to work until Plenary 2004. At that time, its mandate would either be extended or the WGEdu would be dissolved. However, there are long-term capacity building activities that require CEOS support. To retain its value, the Discovery Portal will require frequent maintenance and updating. Capacity building is a crosscutting need among all Modules of the CEOS WSSD Follow up Programme. The Modules would avoid duplication of efforts from a source of a specialized and coherent support. There is also a need for CEOS to maintain linkages to several important capacity building efforts such as the GEO Subgroup on Capacity Building. The WGEdu recommends that in view of the commitment CEOS is making this year, and for the foreseeable future, to education, training and capacity building, the status of the WGEdu should be changed from *ad hoc* to permanent.

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### **ACTION PROPOSED**

CEOS Plenary is invited to change the status of the CEOS *ad hoc* Working Group for Earth Observation Education and Training to permanent.

### **Issue: Change from *ad hoc* to permanent status of the WGEdu**

The CEOS *ad hoc* Working Group for Education and Training in Earth Observation has been tasked to work until Plenary 2004. At that time, its mandate would either be extended or the WGEdu would be dissolved. **The WGEdu recommends that in view of the commitment CEOS is making this year, and for the foreseeable future, to education, training and capacity building, the status of the WGEdu should be changed from *ad hoc* to permanent.** Such a decision by CEOS Plenary would lend support and credibility to this commitment and would allow the WGEdu to develop a long-term vision in planning its work.

There are a number of concrete and practical reasons for the WGEdu to become a permanent working group of CEOS.

1. The Discovery Portal will be a valuable source of information on education and training resources for educators and practitioners. To retain its value, the Discovery Portal will require frequent maintenance and updating, which in turn requires a certain level of coordination among CEOS members and with others in the international capacity building community.
2. Given that education and capacity building is a crosscutting need among all Modules of the CEOS WSSD Follow up Programme, a permanent WGEdu could be a source of a specialized and coherent support. This would avoid duplicating efforts within each Module. The WGEdu has been working very closely with the CEOS WSSD Module 1 on Capacity Building on various education, training and capacity building activities involving Earth observations. Together, they have developed a very synergetic approach to supporting the work of the CEOS Modules.
3. In recent years, there has been a wide recognition of the urgent need for capacity building in space science and technology and in particular in Earth Observation, both in developed and developing countries. As a result, the activities of previously existing education programmes have intensified and new initiatives have been started, some on the global level. A permanent WGEdu would become the CEOS interlocutor (i.e. working level counterpart) and provide linkages to several important capacity building efforts such as the GEO Subgroup on Capacity Building, the IGOS-P, Action Team 17, and to education and capacity building programmes of UNESCO, WMO, FAO, UNOOSA and others.

If the draft principles on satellite data provision are adopted by CEOS, a permanent WGEdu would also allow for a sustainable coordination and identification of data needs of education institutions, availability of data from CEOS Members and Associates, distribution of data and of the feedback reporting on the utilization of the data and its impact on local education programmes.